

Application No. 10/697,030
Amendment dated: March 1, 2006
Reply to Office Action of December 2, 2005

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

One Sheet of Replacement Drawings is attached, in which FIG. 10 is revised to show arrows A, A' and inner wall 41a of the case 41.

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-8 and 10-21 are pending. Claims 9 and 22 are cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein. Claims 1-3, 10, 11-13, and 21 are amended. Claims 1, 3, 11, and 13 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 9, 10, 19, and 20-22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In response, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 9, and independent claim 11 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 22. Claims 9 and 22 have been cancelled. In addition, each of independent claims 3 and 13 has been amended to include a novel combination of elements not taught or suggested by the references cited by the Examiner. Therefore, independent claims 1, 3, 11, and 13 are in condition for allowance.

Information Disclosure Citation

The Information Disclosure Statement filed on July 11, 2005 fails to comply with CFR 1.198 (a) (1). In response, as revised IDS and with Form PTO-SB08 are being filed

concurrently to address the issues pointed out by the Examiner. Acknowledgement is respectfully requested in the next official communication.

Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings. In response, FIG. 10 is revised to show arrows A, A' and inner wall 41a of the case 41. The Examiner is directed to paragraph [00027] which discloses "A wall 103 is formed between the main bulbs 7 and 8 in order for the reflecting surfaces 101 and 102 to be independent of each other to thereby prevent mutual interference of the light."

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings are respectfully requested.

Amendments to the Specification

Paragraph [00039] of the specification is revised in order to provide antecedent basis for arrows A, A' and inner wall 41a of the case 41 as shown in Fig. 10. No new matter is entered.

Claim Objections

Claims 1, 2, 12, and 21 have been amended in response to the Examiner's objection to these claims. Claim 22 has been cancelled. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the claims are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 13, 14, 17, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicants have amended claims 3 and 13 to recite, *inter alia* “wherein said blindfold member has a surface which is formed at such an angle so as to reflect the color of the inner surface of said case in a forward direction with respect to the vehicle, so that when the blindfold member is viewed from the front side of the headlamp, the blindfold member appears to have the color of the inner surface of the case”.

Support for the amendments to claims 3 and 13 can be seen in FIG. 10. In addition, Applicants have amended the paragraph [00039] of the specification in order to provide proper antecedent basis in the specification for the claimed subject matter.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3 and 13, as amended, and claims 4 and 14 as currently written, are fully supported by and adequately described in the written description of the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 1, 5, 11, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kano et al. (DE 19649602);

Claims 3 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hitoshi (JP 200322923A);

Claims 11 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Halvorson, Jr. (U.S. 1,394,896);

Claims 2, 6, 12, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kano et al. in view of Puente et al. (GB 2,254,686.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

Amendments to Independent Claims 1 and 11

As described above, but while not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 9, and independent claim 11 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 22. Claims 9 and 22 have been cancelled.

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in each of independent claims 1 and 11 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Kano et al. and Halvorson, Jr.

At least for the reasons explained above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in each of independent claims 1 and 11 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Kano et al. and Halvorson, Jr. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Therefore, claims 1 and 11 are in condition for allowance.

Amendments to Independent Claims 3 and 13

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that each of independent claims 3 and 13 has been amended herein to recite a novel combination of elements directed to a headlamp assembly including *inter alia*

a case having a colored inner surface disposed so as to enclose a rear portion of said reflector and supporting the reflector;

a blindfold member is provided to fill a gap which is formed between said case and said reflector when viewed from the front side, the blindfold member having an surface facing and straddling an area where a side edge of the lens is connected to the inner surface of the case,

wherein said surface of said blindfold is formed at such an angle so as to reflect the color of the inner surface of said case in a forward direction with respect to the vehicle, so that when the blindfold member is viewed from the front side of the headlamp, the blindfold member appears to have the color of the inner surface of the case.

Support for the novel features set forth in claims 3 and 13 can be found in the specification, for example, in paragraph [00039], and seen in FIG. 10.

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in each of independent claims 3 and 13 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Hitoshi.

In contrast to the present invention, Hitoshi (see FIG. 7) merely discloses a peripheral edge extending sideways from the reflector 38, and disposed entirely rearward of the forward edge of the case 30. The peripheral edge does not face and straddle the point where the case and the lens are connected.

The surface of Hitoshi cited by the Examiner is completely different from the blindfold member of claims 3 and 13 of the present invention.

At least for the reasons explained above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in each of independent claims 3 and 13 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Hitoshi. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Therefore, claims 3 and 13 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 2, 10, 12, and 21 have been amended.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

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All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Dated: March 1, 2006 

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: One Sheet of Replacement Drawings (FIG.10)